

September 22, 2025

The Honorable Judge Wilkins
United States District Court

Re: Objection to Injunctive Relief Settlement – Adverse Impact on Olympic Sports

Dear Judge Wilkins,

My name is Scott Iannaccone, and I am a student-athlete at California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo. I write to you on behalf of myself and my teammates who all lost a swim program that was unfairly cut.

On March 7, 2025, Cal Poly announced that it was cutting both its men's and women's swimming and diving programs. President Jeffrey Armstrong described the decision as "an unfortunate reality given the approved NCAA House settlement, state budget, and the tenuous situation moving forward for both the state and the NCAA." Unfortunately, this decision has had devastating consequences on my life, my teammates, and our broader community.

Swimming at Cal Poly was a dream come true for me. My older brother, Ryan, swam here for four years, and I was honored to follow in his footsteps. As Latino student-athletes on a diverse collegiate swim team, this program gave us a true sense of belonging, discipline, and pride. I had just finished my second year on the team when it was suddenly taken away.

Despite operating on a shoestring budget of \$250,000 a year (of which \$85,000 was raised by the team), our program thrived. Last year, our men's team was undefeated in league meets and our program held the highest GPA of any athletic team at the university. Many of us, myself included, made the Dean's List while balancing demanding practices with full academic loads. Yet, the administration chose to eliminate our sport, while continuing to spend \$6.9 million annually on its football program.

The impact on us as student-athletes was immediate and harsh. We lost access to our pool, gym, and locker room privileges, which disrupted our daily routines and training. Several teammates, myself included, struggled with the shock of losing not only our sport, but also the structure and community that supported our academic success.

Despite our efforts to collect donations, we learned that Cal Poly turned down \$9 million in pledges and gifts that were raised to save our program. Multiple requests from current team members, alumni, Title IX attorney Leigh Ernst Friestedt, and advocate Nancy Hogshead have been

disregarded, even though reinstating the team would align with Title IX compliance and President Donald J. Trump's Executive Order titled "Saving College Sports."

President Armstrong and Athletic Director Don Oberhelman also chose to opt in to the House Settlement, even though only about 50% of peer schools with football programs in the Big West did so. This choice directly contributed to the financial justification they used to cut our program. Also, just last week the same Athletic Director who cut our program donated \$250k to the already overfunded football program.

I respectfully object to the Injunctive Relief Settlement and urge the Court to consider the adverse impact on Olympic non-revenue sports. College swimming and diving has historically been a pipeline to the U.S. Olympic team, and cutting programs like ours endangers the future of American competitiveness on the world stage.

Your decision has the power to shape not only the future of Cal Poly athletics, but also the broader principle of whether schools can disregard affordable Olympic sports in favor of protecting disproportionately expensive programs. For me, this was more than just a sport—it was my education, my community, and my dream.

Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration.

Respectfully,

Scott Iannaccone
NCAA #2101100837

Cal Poly San Luis Obispo Student-Athlete

A handwritten signature in black ink, featuring a series of loops and a long, sweeping horizontal stroke across the top.